

this very strongly. It is two groups of people exchanging ideas.”

Does the collaboration help scientists in their own work? “In terms of describing nature, I don’t think it helps that much,” says CERN scientist Michael Doser, who is teaming up with “Signatures” sculptor Monica Sand to make particle collisions visible to the naked eye with light-emitting scintillators. “The real effect is a nimbleness of mind that gets developed by having your assumptions questioned.”

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## NEWS NOTES

**Proceedings online.** “Our goal in creating eConf is to completely displace print publishers of [physics] conference proceedings,” says eConf cofounder Michael Peskin, a physicist at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, which launched the Web site this past October (see <http://www.slac.stanford.edu/econf>). The idea is to get conference proceedings—starting with high-energy physics—online quickly and cheaply, to archive them long-term, and to link them to broader, searchable publications databases, such as SLAC’s SPIRES and the electronic preprint archives at Los Alamos National Laboratory. A handful of such online archives already exist, but they are neither linked nor easily searched, says Peskin. Meanwhile, publishers of print proceedings, whose earnings eConf could eat into, are keeping close watch. The American Institute of Physics, for example, which puts out proceedings

from some 50 conferences each year, foresees a continuing role for print proceedings, but also plans to start posting them electronically later this year.

**State Department fellowship.** The American Institute of Physics and the Department of State are creating a new science fellowship allowing a physical scientist or engineer to spend a year working on the science and technology aspects of foreign policy issues. The selected fellow will provide scientific expertise to the department while “learning firsthand how scientific and technical knowledge can contribute to the nation’s foreign policy,” the announcement said. Norman Neureiter, science and technology adviser to the secretary of state, said the department’s regional bureaus, which cover specific geographical areas, are weak on science, and that’s where he hopes to assign the AIP fellow. The range of problems faced by the bureaus includes everything from mad cow disease in Europe to cybersecurity in Asia, he said. The idea for the fellowship originated with the AIP governing board more than a year ago, when concerns were expressed about the lack of scientific expertise within the State Department, said James Stith, director of AIP’s Physics Resources Center. Fellowship applicants must be US citizens, have a PhD or equivalent research experience in physics or a related field, and belong to one of AIP’s member societies. The fellowship has an annual stipend of \$49 000. Applications are due 15 April. More information can be found at <http://www.aip.org/mgr/sdf.html>. ■

### Web Watch

<http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals>

From Caltech physicist Kenneth Libbrecht comes **Snow Crystals**, a Web page devoted to exploring the physics behind the nature of snow crystals and why they form such a variety of shapes.



<http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/review.html>

Published by Harvard Medical School’s Center for Health and the Global Environment, **The Quarterly Review** provides expert-written nontechnical summaries of the most important recent scientific findings about changes to the global environment and their potential consequences for human health.



<http://www.solgel.com>

The Sol-Gel Gateway provides a Web portal to the world of those colloidal systems known as sols and gels. Put together by Michel Prassas of Corning’s European Research Center, the site is updated monthly with contributions from the site’s editorial board as well as from sol-gel researchers worldwide.



To suggest topics or sites for Web Watch, please e-mail us at [ptwww@aip.org](mailto:ptwww@aip.org).

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